DEFINITIONS OF STUDENT SUCCESS: BAAC CONFERENCE, 2-23-15

Knowing that transitions may be necessary, retention requires a constant effort to ensure student success, engagement, and mindset. Regarding retention and degree completion, the majority of coursework should relate to the major though students should also receive a breadth of inquiry. Students should use other entities on campus, such as career advisors, to ensure future success. Advisors should coach students by acknowledging that they can be successful. Successful student graduation includes the completion of degree requirements in a time frame consistent with the student’s circumstances.

Student success is: students taking ownership of their educational journey, being engaged in the community, and completion/conferral of degree requirements in a time line consistent with an individuals’ goals and circumstances--family, major, jobs, life changes etc.

Borrowing from Dr. Marc Lowenstein, student success requires “integrative learning.” It is therefore a combination of degree progress, student satisfaction, retention, and finally, graduation. We begin with acknowledging the change that the transition to and throughout college is. Having that mindset allows students to more successfully complete courses toward their degree goals, and thus make degree progress. However, this should also include taking advantage of other non-academic opportunities along the way. Indeed, such concurrent participation in both coursework and extra-curricular activities leads to better retention, given that continuous enrollment is a reflection of not only positive academic performance, but also student satisfaction with their institution and academic program. Ultimately, this leads to the conferral of degree requirements and graduation, consistent with the individual’s goals.